



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2023-0041]

Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillators (ICDs)

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of applications for exemption; request for comments.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces receipt of applications from four individuals for an exemption from the prohibition in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) against operation of a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) by persons with a current clinical diagnosis of myocardial infarction, angina pectoris, coronary insufficiency, thrombosis, or any other cardiovascular disease of a variety known to be accompanied by syncope (transient loss of consciousness), dyspnea (shortness of breath), collapse, or congestive heart failure. If granted, the exemptions would enable these individuals with ICDs to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by the Federal Docket Management System Docket No. FMCSA-2023-0041 using any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to www.regulations.gov/, insert the docket number (FMCSA-2023-0041) in the keyword box and click “Search.” Next, sort the results by “Posted (Newer-Older),” choose the first notice listed, and click on the “Comment” button. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

- Mail: Dockets Operations; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590-0001.
- Hand Delivery: West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.
- Fax: (202) 493-2251.

To avoid duplication, please use only one of these four methods. See the “Public Participation” portion of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for instructions on submitting comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Christine A. Hydock, Chief, Medical Programs Division, FMCSA, DOT, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W64-224, Washington, DC 20590-0001, (202) 366-4001, fmcsamedical@dot.gov. Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. If you have questions regarding viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Dockets Operations, (202) 366-9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Public Participation

A. Submitting Comments

If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this notice (Docket No. FMCSA-2023-0041), indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation. You may submit your comments and material online or by fax, mail, or hand delivery, but please use only one of these means. FMCSA recommends that you include your name and a mailing address, an email address, or a phone number in the body of your document so that FMCSA can contact you if there are questions regarding your submission.

To submit your comment online, go to www.regulations.gov/docket?D=FMCSA-2023-0041. Next, sort the results by “Posted (Newer-Older),” choose the first notice listed, click the “Comment” button, and type your comment into the text box on the following screen. Choose whether you are submitting your comment as an individual or on behalf of a third party and then submit.

If you submit your comments by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing.

FMCSA will consider all comments and material received during the comment period.

B. Viewing Comments

To view comments, go to www.regulations.gov. Insert the docket number (FMCSA-2023-0041) in the keyword box and click “Search.” Next, sort the results by “Posted (Newer-Older),” choose the first notice listed, and click “Browse Comments.” If you do not have access to the internet, you may view the docket online by visiting Dockets Operations in Room W12-140 on the ground floor of the DOT West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 366-9317 or (202) 366-9826 before visiting Dockets Operations.

C. Privacy Act

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(6), DOT solicits comments from the public on the exemption requests. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to www.regulations.gov. As described in the system of records notice DOT/ALL 14 (Federal Docket Management System), which can be reviewed at <https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/privacy/privacy-act-system-records-notices>, the comments are searchable by the name of the submitter.

II. Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b), FMCSA may grant an exemption from the FMCSRs for no longer than a 5-year period if it finds such exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved absent such exemption. The statutes also allow the Agency to renew exemptions at the end of the 5-year period. FMCSA grants medical exemptions from the FMCSRs for a 2-year period to align with the maximum duration of a driver's medical certification.

The four individuals listed in this notice have requested an exemption from § 391.41(b)(4). Accordingly, the Agency will evaluate the qualifications of each applicant to determine whether granting the exemption will achieve the required level of safety mandated by statute.

The physical qualification standard found in § 391.41(b)(4) states that a person is physically qualified to drive a CMV if that person has no current clinical diagnosis of myocardial infarction, angina pectoris, coronary insufficiency, thrombosis, or any other cardiovascular disease of a variety known to be accompanied by syncope, dyspnea, collapse, or congestive cardiac failure.

In addition to the regulations, FMCSA has published advisory criteria¹ to assist medical examiners in determining whether drivers with certain medical conditions are qualified to operate a CMV in interstate commerce. The advisory criteria states that ICDs are disqualifying due to risk of syncope.

III. Qualifications of Applicants

Kevin Coughlin

Kevin Coughlin is a class A driver's license holder in Massachusetts. A letter dated January 12, 2023, from Kevin Coughlin's cardiologist reports that the ICD was

¹ These criteria may be found in 49 CFR part 391, Appendix A to Part 391—Medical Advisory Criteria, Section D. Cardiovascular: § 391.41(b)(4), paragraph 4, which is available on the internet at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2015-title49-vol5/pdf/CFR-2015-title49-vol5-part391-appA.pdf>.

implanted 25 years ago due to a diagnosis of long QT syndrome. Kevin Coughlin's cardiologist reports that in 2003, they received one defibrillation but for the last 20 years, they have not experienced any dangerous arrhythmias or defibrillator shock therapies and that their condition is stable.

Charles Halepakis

Charles Halepakis is a class A driver's license holder in Massachusetts. Charles Halepakis' ICD was implanted on January 11, 2022. Their cardiologist reports diagnoses of cardiomyopathy, coronary artery disease, and heart failure. Since the implantation of the device, the cardiologist reports that Charles Halepakis has experienced no overt heart failure symptoms and that they maintain a high functional capacity on a limited medical regimen

Antonio Maceroni

Antonio Maceroni is a class B driver's license holder in Michigan. A letter dated November 9, 2022, from Antonio Maceroni's health care provider reports that their ICD was implanted on January 5, 2021, due to a diagnosis of ventricular tachycardia. Since being implanted, Antonio Maceroni has experienced six episodes of cardiac arrhythmias which received pace terminated therapy. The healthcare provider reports that Antonio Maceroni denies symptoms of ventricular tachycardia related arrhythmia since the implantation.

Michael Wilson

Michael Wilson is a class A driver's license holder in Florida. Michael Wilson's ICD was implanted on February 12, 2015. The cardiologist reports that the ICD was implanted due to diagnoses of cardiomyopathy and cardiac sarcoidosis with high-risk features. Since implantation, Michael Wilson had a single episode of syncope in 2015, with no subsequent reports of shocks or cardiac complaints.

IV. Request for Comments

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b), FMCSA requests public comment from all interested persons on the exemption petitions described in this notice. We will consider all comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated under the **DATES** section of the notice.

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2023-03019 Filed: 2/10/2023 8:45 am; Publication Date: 2/13/2023]